Shortage of staff in DGCA

2956. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether as reported in media the Indian aviation is heading towards disaster;

(b) if so, whether any mechanisms are put in place to ensure the safety of air travel in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the issue of shortage of staff in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has been looked into;

(e) if so, the steps taken to address the same; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) mechanisms for ensuring safety of air operations have been evolved over the years and are in place. These include stringent training standards for pilots and engineers, effective oversight and regulatory control by DGCA, frequent spot checks and audits on operations and maintenance activities, interactive meetings with airlines to address their issues, formation of National Safety Teams at Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) level in coordination with industry representatives to bring in proactive improvements and safety enhancements etc.

(d) and (e) The Government had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri M.K. Kaw, former Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation to review the roles and functions of DGCA. Out of the 276 recommendations 27 specifically pertain to additional manpower requirement in DGCA. These recommendations were accepted by Government for implementation and necessary action has been initiated.

(f) Does not arise.

Delay in flights of Air India

2957. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are instances in which Air India flights had been delayed in both departure and arrivals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of instances and reasons for those delay, and financial loss to Air India due to these for the last three years, year-wise, airport-wise and category-wise; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to avoid these delays?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Flights of airlines including that of Air India get delayed for various reasons. Delays are mainly of two types—One within the control of the airline such as technical snags, shortage of crew/aircraft etc. and the other outside the control of the

airline like weather, airport congestion, ATC delays. The delays include consequential delays, which are as a result of primary delay at the originating station having a cascading effect at other en-route stations.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) The following measures have been implemented by Air India to bring about improvement in on-time performance: (i) Prune and consolidate flights, with a view to sustaining undisrupted and punctual operations; (ii) Continuous review of aircraft routing, delays, crew allocations etc. by senior executives with a view to achieving optimum utilisation of crew and substantial savings; (iii) a new base for crew was opened in thiruvananthapuram; (iv) Enhance aircraft maintenance reserve; (v) A corporate level Control Room has been set up at Delhi headed by an Executive Director which will ultimately be integrated with the Hub Control set-up in Mumbai. The control Room at Delhi, Hub Control at Mumbai and Regional Coordination Cell have a dedicated officer in each shift to regularly communicate with the Call Centre through Hot lines to keep them apprised of the flight status continuously; (vi) A mini Control Cell is being set up at Thiruvananthapuram to monitor flight operations; (vii) a Punctuality Coordination Cell has been functioning at Mumbai on round-the-clock to coordinate various flight handling departments and ensure punctuality of flights.

Lending of IAF pilots

2958. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the airlines are facing shortage of trained pilots;

(b) if so, the extent of this shortage;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Indian Air Force (IAF) has been asked to lend its pilots to the airlines;

(d) if so, under what conditions the services of Indian air force's pilots can be used for civil airlines; and

(e) whether IAF pilots can be hired by the private airlines too?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Civil Aviation industry in the country is facing a shortage of approximately 1000 type rated pilots.

(c) Yes, Sir. 12 Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots have been inducted in Air India.

(d) The induction is on the basis of their flying experience in Air Force and subsequently passing examination conducted by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for civil licence followed by Air India's training for P-2 endorsement on type of their aircraft.

(e) So far no proposal has been received from private airline for induction of IAF pilots.

New airport of Noida

2959. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1099 given in the Rajya Sabha on 11th March, 2008 and state:

(a) whether Government has given in principle approval for construction of the Greater NOIDA airport last year;